

MIDDLE EAST: ADVANCE COPIES 17

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TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 278 OF 30 JUN

INFO PRIORITY MODUK (DI4), MOSCOW, WASHINGTON. ROUTINE BAGHDAD, BEIRUT, CAIRO, DAMASCUS, JEDDA, MUSCAT, TEL AVIV, B I SECTION TEHRAN, UKMIS NEW YORK, UKDEL NATO.

MOSCOW TELNO 367: JORDAN/SOVIET UNION

1. WHEN I SAW KING HUSSEIN TODAY, HE SPOKE ABOUT HIS RECENT VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION FROM 23-28 JUNE. AFTER SPENDING 2 OR 3 DAYS IN THE CRIMEA, HE HAD VISITED MOSCOW AND LENINGRAD AND HAD HAD TWO WORKING SESSIONS WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THE PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER. HOWEVER THE MEETING HE HAD BEEN PROMISED WITH

WORKING SESSIONS WITH SOVIET OFFICIALS, INCLUDING THE PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER. HOWEVER THE MEETING HE HAD BEEN PROMISED WITH MR BREZHNEV HAD BEEN CANCELLED SEMICLN IN VIEW OF THIS AND OF DETERIORATING SITUATION IN LEBANON HE HAD CUT SHORT HIS VISIT AND RETURNED HOME. SOVIET OFFICIALS HAD TOLD HIM IN CONFIDENCE THAT MR BREZHNEV HAD HAD ANOTHER "FAILURE OF THE HEART" AND COULD NOT NOW BE EXPECTED TO LIVE LONG.

LEBANON

2. THE KING SAID HE HAD CONCLUDED THAT THE RUSSIANS WERE DETERMINED TO EXPLOIT THE ISRAELI INVASION OF THE LEBANON TO THE LIMIT. THEY HAD MADE IT CLEAR TO HIM THAT THEIR RELATIONS WITH SYRIA WERE SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL AND CLAIMED TO HAVE REPLACED ALL THE LOSSES OF EQUIPMENT REPORTED BY SYRIA SEMICLN THE KING SAID HE HAD NO IDEA WHETHER BY THIS THE RUSSIANS MEANT THAT THE EQUIPMENT IN QUESTION HAD ALREADY BEEN SENT OF MERELY PROMISED.

3. IN CLAIMING THAT THEY HAD DONE EVERYTHING THEY COULD TO PREVENT THE ISRAELI ATTACK ON LEBANON, THE RUSSIANS HAD BITTERLY CRITICISED US POLICIES AND IN PARTICULAR HAD ALLEGED THAT THE US CONTINGENT IN THE SINAI PEACEKEEPING FORCE WAS AN ADVANCE ELEMENT OF THE RAPID DEPLOYMENT FORCE WHICH COULD BE REINFORCED QUICKLY. THE KING SAID HE HAD REPLIED THAT THE AMERICANS HARDLY NEEDED THIS, AS THEY ALREADY HAD ALL THE FACILITIES THEY REQUIRED AVAILABLE TO THEM IN ISRAEL. THE KING ALSO CLAIMED THAT HE HAD DEFENDED EGYPT AGAINST SHARP SOVIET CRITICISM ON SEVERAL COUNTS. HE MENTIONED THAT A VERY IMPORTANT SYRIAN (POSSIBLY PRESIDENT ASAD HIMSELF, ALTHOUGH THE RUSSIANS HAD TAKEN GREAT CARE TO KEEP THE VISIT SECRET) HAD VISITED MOSCOW ON 26 JUNE.

IRAQ/IRAN

4. THE RUSSIANS SAID THEY HAD OPPOSED THE IRAQ/IRAN CONFLICT FROM THE OUTSET, AND NOW THOUGHT THAT IRAN WOULD NOT STOP AT THE IRAQI FRONTIER. THEY GAVE THE IMPRESSION TO THE KING THAT THEY WERE VERY SATISFIED WITH THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE IRANIAN REGIME, CLAIMING THAT WHATEVER THEIR IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES KHOMEINI HAD REMOVED US BASES AND MADE OTHER GESTURES TOWARDS THE SOVIET UNION WHICH MERITED SPECIAL TREATMENT IN RETURN.

5. THE KING SAID HE ALSO FELT THAT THE RUSSIANS WOULD CONTINUE THEIR EFFORTS TO UNDERMINE IRAQ AND THE GULF STATES. WHEN HE HAD EXPRESSED INCOMPREHENSION TO THE RUSSIANS THAT THEY COULD HAVE A TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP WITH IRAQ AND YET ALLOW SOVIET ARMS TO REACH IRAN EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH THIRD PARTIES, REGARDLESS OF END-USER AGREEMENTS FORBIDDING THE TRANSFER OF ARMS OF SOVIET ORIGIN TO OTHERS WITHOUT THE EXPRESS AGREEMENT OF THE SOVIET UNION, THE RUSSIANS HAD TRIED TO SHRUG THIS OFF. THEY HAD CLAIMED THAT, IF THEY REALLY WISHED TO PUT THE PRESSURE ON IRAQ, THEY WOULD REMOVE SOVIET FORCES FROM THE IRANIAN BORDER AND RELEASE MORE

IF THEY REALLY WISHED TO PUT THE PRESSURE ON IRAQ, THEY WOULD REMOVE SOVIET FORCES FROM THE IRANIAN BORDER AND RELEASE MORE IRANIAN TROOPS FOR THE GULF WAR SEMICLN WHEN THE KING SUGGESTED THAT THEY HAD ALREADY DONE JUST THIS, THE RUSSIANS HAD REPLIED THAT THEY COULD GO A LOT FURTHER THAN THEY HAD ALREADY (''AS WE DID FOR TURKEY AT THE TIME OF THEIR DISPUTE WITH GREECE OVER CYPRUS'').

6. AT THE SAME TIME THE RUSSIANS HAD ALSO TOLD THE KING THAT THEY VERY MUCH WANTED TO ESTABLISH FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH BOTH SAUDI ARABIA AND OMAN (THE KING REFERRED AT THIS POINT TO A RUSSIAN WHO HAD GOT LOST IN THE DESERT AND WHOSE CAR AND CORPSE HAD BEEN FOUND BY THE OMANI AUTHORITIES SEMICLN HE SAID HE HAD ACTED AS AN INTERMEDIARY BETWEEN THE RUSSIANS AND OMANIS IN THIS CASE, AND THAT THE RUSSIANS HAD EXPRESSED THEIR GRATITUDE TO THE OMANIS THROUGH HIM AND THEIR WISH FOR CLOSER RELATIONS).

MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT

7. KING HUSSEIN SAID THE RUSSIANS HAD NEEDED HIM ON THE POSSIBILITY THAT JORDAN MIGHT JOIN THE CAMP DAVID NEGOTIATIONS IN SOME NEW FORM. THE KING SAID HE HAD TRIED TO EXPLAIN WITH AS MUCH PATIENCE AS HE COULD MUSTER THAT JORDAN, WHICH WAS A SMALL COUNTRY, HAD IN THE PAST WITHSTOOD VERY GREAT PRESSURE TO FORCE HER INTO THE CAMP DAVID NEGOTIATIONS AND WAS NOT ABOUT TO CHANGE HER POSITION NOW. IT WOULD BE BEST TO FORGET ABOUT CAMP DAVID AND AIM FOR A COMPREHENSIVE MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT, TO WHICH HE BELIEVED THE RUSSIANS WERE ALSO COMMITTED.

8. WHILE THE KING EMPHASISED THAT THE RUSSIANS HAD, AS ALWAYS, BEEN GENEROUS AND CONSIDERATE HOSTS, HE ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT HIS TALKS HAD LEFT HIM UNEASY ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES, PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO SOVIET INTENTIONS TOWARDS IRAQ AND THE GULF STATES AND THEIR SUPPORT FOR IRAN. CROWN PRINCE HASSAN TOLD MY GERMAN COLLEAGUE OF HIS ANNOYANCE THAT THE RUSSIANS HAD DRAFTED THE TASS STATEMENT ABOUT THE KING'S VISIT (SEE MOSCOW'S TUR) IN SUCH A WAY AS TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION THAT IT WAS A JOINT COMMUNIQUE, WHEREAS IN FACT IT WAS THEIR OWN ACCOUNT OF THE VISIT WHICH INCLUDED PHRASES WHICH THE JORDANIANS WOULD NEVER HAVE ACCEPTED.

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